

PM Dedicates Chenani-Nashri Tunnel in J&K to the Nation Shri Gadkari Says Rs 7000 Crores to be Invested in Highways Projects in J&K in the Next Two Years.

The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated India's longest highways tunnel - the Chenani-Nashri tunnel in Jammu & Kashmir- to the nation today. Speaking on the occasion he said that the tunnel will not only reduce the distance between Jammu and Srinagar, but will also promote tourism in the valley, open up employment opportunities for the youth and give a boost to development in the state. The Prime Minister thanked the Minister of Road Transport & Highways and Shipping Shri Nitin Gadkari and his team for the tunnel and appreciated the youth for contributing their labour for the development of the state.

Shri Nitin Gandkari expressed happiness at India's longest highways tunnel being dedicated to the nation. He said that Rs 7000 crores will be invested in highways projects in Jammu and Kashmir in the next two years. He said a ring road will be built around Jammu at a cost of Rs 2100 crores and another one around Srinagar at a cost of Rs 2200 crores. Work on this will start in the next three months, he said. Shri Gadkari also informed that Zojila tunnel is being built between Leh and Ladakh at a cost of Rs 6000 crores. He informed that during the year 2016-17, Rs 1019 crore have been sanctioned for 72 projects in Jammu & Kashmir.

Also speaking on the occasion Dr Jitendra Singh, MoS in the PMO thanked Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and said that this is the beginning of a new India under his leadership. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti thanked the Prime Minister and the Central Government for the support extended to the state.

An ideal example of the government's 'Make in India' and 'Skill India' initiative, the 9 km long, twin-tube, all-weather tunnel between Udhampur and Ramban in Jammu & Kashmir is not only India's longest highways tunnel but also Asia's longest bi-directional highways tunnel. Built at an elevation of 1200 metres on one of the most difficult Himalayan terrains, the tunnel will cut the travel time between Jammu and Srinagar by two hours, bypassing about 41 kms of road length. It will also ensure an all weather passage on a route that often sees heavy traffic jams and disruptions due to landslides, snow, sharp curves, breakdown of vehicles and accidents.

The tunnel is a part of the 286-km-long four-laning of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. The structure consists of a 9 km long, two-laned main tunnel with a parallel escape tunnel of same length. The two tunnels are connected by 29 cross passages at regular intervals along the entire length of the tunnel. These cross passages can be used for evacuation of vehicles and commuters in case of breakdown or any other emergency. There are two minor bridges on the south and north sides and 4-lane approach roads with Toll Plazas on both ends of the tunnel. The maximum height permitted in the tunnel is 5 meters and for checking the height special sensors have been installed just before the toll points at both ends.

The tunnel has an efficient, transverse ventilation system. There are inlets bringing fresh air at 8 metre intervals and outlet for exhaust every 100 metres. There is also a fully-integrated control system with ventilation, communication, power supply, incident detection, SOS call box and fire

fighting. Fitted with intelligent traffic mechanism, the tunnel has fully automatic smart control and no human intervention will be required for its operations. The tunnel is also equipped with advanced scanners to ward off any security threat. Very few tunnels in the world have this kind of fully integrated tunnel control.

The project is also environment friendly. The time saving on the Jammu- Srinagar route will further result in fuel saving of approximately Rs 27 lakhs per day. Besides, the construction of the tunnel has avoided large –scale deforestation.

The Chenani-Nashri tunnel will have a very positive impact on the state economy. In line with the Skill India initiative of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the skill sets of local people were developed and improved, and they were engaged for construction of this tunnel. The project has provided employment to over 2,000 unskilled and skilled youth of Jammu and Kashmir as 94 percent of the work force was from the state. Around 600 to 900 people from across the country also worked on this project in 3 shifts over the past 4 years.

UM/ NP/NK
(Release ID :160420)